

(May 7, 2019 meeting*, in preparation for Senate meeting of May 15, 2019)

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SENATE

The minutes of the Senate meeting of April 17, 2019 were circulated to the Steering Committee, and the Steering Committee provided feedback. It is recommended that they now be considered by Senate for approval.

2. SPEAKING RIGHTS

The Steering Committee requests speaking rights for Tynan Jarrett (Senior Employment Equity Advisor), Charles Lavergne (Senior Project Director, Analysis, Planning and Budget) and Irina Susan-Resiga (Senior Planning Analyst, Analysis, Planning and Budget) for item IIB6 (Report on Employment Equity).

3. CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

The Steering Committee recommends that Senate hold a confidential session for discussion of item IIB12, Report of Honorary Degrees and Convocations Committee (D18-75).

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Steering Committee has reviewed the Agenda for the present meeting and recommends it for approval.

5. REVIEW OF MOTION

A motion by Senators Erik Larson, Gregory Mikkelson and Madeline Wilson was submitted to the Steering Committee for review. The motion proposed the creation of a new Senate standing committee on social responsibility, related to the question of divestment from the fossil fuel industry. It called for Senate to mandate the Nominating Committee to propose to Senate, in September 2019, the committee's terms of reference, and recommended that the membership of the committee be determined by an election of Senators.

The Steering Committee discussed the background and rationale of the motion, highlighting some inaccuracies in the facts presented. However, the main issue raised by the Steering Committee with respect to the motion was one of governance. It was thus on the basis of governance that the Committee decided to decline consideration of the motion by Senate. One Committee member (Mr. Jacob Shapiro) disagreed with the Committee's decision.

In arriving at its decision, the Committee discussed the statutory authority and responsibility of each of the two University's governing bodies, noting the following:

- Board of Governors: has general jurisdiction and final authority over the conduct of the affairs of the University (Statutes, 1.3.1).

- Senate: subject to the authority and powers of the Board, has general control and supervision over the academic activities of the University (Statutes, 6.3, 6.3.2).

Based on this general distinction, members considered the ability of both bodies to establish committees necessary for the proper exercise of their respective mandates. It was acknowledged that, in comparison to the authority of Senate, that of the Board is broader, in line with the additional duties the Board has due to its fiduciary role. One of the Board's responsibilities is to ensure the University's financial sustainability. To that end, the Board holds authority over investment decisions, and has established committees that help it discharge its responsibilities in this area of its mandate. One of the Board's committees is presently working on advising it on the question of divestment, pursuant to the Senate resolution approved by Senate in September 2018. Noting the academic mandate of Senate, certain members expressed concern that a Senate committee that would examine matters of social responsibility purely from an academic perspective might infringe on academic freedom. Members also questioned the necessity and value of establishing a standing committee with such a limited mandate.

Members then considered comments related to the question of academic representation on both the Board and the Senate. In particular, certain members expressed concern with the view that the collegium is represented by Senate. It was acknowledged that the presence of Senate representatives, elected academic staff, students and the Senate Chair on the Board of Governors, makes both governance bodies (the Board and the Senate) representative of the collegium.

Finally, in response to comments concerning the role of the Senate appointed representatives, members pointed out that the two representatives of Senate were appointed to participate in CAMSR's consultation process (as was noted in the Senate minutes of November 2018) and not in its deliberations about the question of divestment. Lastly, some members pointed out that there are other mechanisms for Senators to express their views on the work being done by CAMSR, including through the Senate representatives on the Board and directly to CAMSR.

6. DEBRIEF ON APRIL OPEN DISCUSSION

The Steering Committee discussed the April open discussion on "The Future of the Master's Degree." It was indicated that the discussion was productive and would inform the development of new programs.

The Steering Committee also reviewed the feedback from Senators with respect to the question asked at the end of the open discussion ("I wish we had a Master's program that..."), which is included as Appendix A.

Present: Suzanne Fortier (*Chair*); Angela Campbell, Kenneth Hastings, Terry Hébert, Christopher Manfredi, Jim Nicell, Nate Qutoriano, Marc Richard, Edyta Rogowska (*Secretary*), Jacob Shapiro.
Regrets: Terry Hébert, Erik Larson.

**The documents submitted to the Senate Steering Committee for this meeting are available to Senators for perusal in the Secretariat (James Administration Building, Room 313). Senators who would like to view the documents should contact Ms. Georgia Ntentis, Governance Officer (Senate), by phone at 514-398-6827 or email at georgia.ntentis@mcgill.ca.*

Senate held an open discussion on the Future of the Master's Degree on April 17, 2019. After the discussion, Senators were asked to complete the following sentence: "I wish we had a Master's program that..." Input provided by Senators is transcribed below.

1. I think it is super important that Applied MSc provide students with strong clear skill sets/competencies. The T-shaped education (balancing depth and breadth) is challenging. How do we do this without sacrificing one or the other (usually depth)? The combined MSc is an interesting concept. We need to remember funding (scholarships) – are students in an Applied MSc eligible for fellowships etc.; I like the comment of listening to the "students" – consulting students/research graduates; I do not agree with a weakened MSc (i.e. 30 credit) – that is an undergraduate diploma – we risk weakening our reputation.
2. Integrates with top tier schools across Canada, such that a student studying AI has lessons from professors at Waterloo, UBC, UofT, along with McGill.
3. Addresses the needs/desires of industry and students; had incentives for those involved in developing it; involved industry, perhaps through co-ops.
4. Allowed students to tap into university expertise regardless of faculty boundaries/national/global boundaries; this should include the School of Continuing Studies more integrally; Was flexible to include work experimental learning an mobility constraints or needs (time, location); That was delivered in blended (online/face-to-face/distance) learning modes to allow for best practices in learning outcomes; Allow for incorporation of prior learning assessments and competency based program rather than just based on number of hours.
5. Created a link between employers and academic and provided opportunities for recent graduates to both work and seek a higher degree that will complement their work.
6. Would have been approved internally and externally in a much more expedited fashion; non-research master's program an often developed to respond to the ever changing needs of society. Often the approval process is so long that the "niche" area developed for the program is no longer "niche"
7. Held out for the 2-year model. Despite currents moving in the other direction, given the importance of a longer experience for MA students in the Humanities. McGill English is one of the few MA programs in Canada that has retained the 2-year model.

Integrated a pedagogical dimension into the training, to help students in the Humanities with equipment for some job markets

Trained students in the digital humanities as well as another research unit.

8. Allows working individuals to fully participate in their program at convenient times.

9. Was devoted to helping older people to collect their living histories
10. Fosters professional development
11. Are adaptable to the strengths and interests of students who seek to broaden their education, rather than narrow their disciplinary focus; Can nimbly adopt to opportunities to connect with institutions in Montreal, abroad and throughout the countries; Could be reasonable completed within a one-year period (i.e. the norm, rather than the exception); Cross over between disciplines throughout the university; Explicitly work to provide students with an experiential learn opportunities.
12. Would link better with industry by providing campus – based industry coordinators
13. I don't really understand what the problem is: Why is decreased enrollment in a thesis option viewed as problematic in an itself? Is there a decreased in enrollment overall? I generally get quite nervous when universities see themselves as the training department for corporate/industry groups. I resist this framework as the key purpose of our university.
14. Would connect social work program with the Environmental studies, with the intention to emphasize on linking the nature and its activities used to repair/-apply social work programs to the population that needs it. Other words: bringing the quiet and peaceful activities that can be observed in the nature, and done /-apply them to the social work needs.
15. Made funding available on par with UT, UBC, Queen's, McMaster, Dalhousie, Ryerson, U Laval, Waterloo, Simon Fraser, Concordia. Really. All Canadian Universities...
16. Further my knowledge in a specific topic that can later be used in a practical way.
17. Encouraged learning and research for their own sake; was attentive to social needs but was ahead of the curve to allow students to adapt their learning and focus. Was not seen as a cash flow for the University.
18. Was not stuck in the 1980s. Students now use these programs as a holding action and professors use them to push students into a PhD. I think we need to rethink what an MSc is for. Co-op; student alumni input
19. Innovative, updated, Market drive; for non-thesis Masters, then must be strong components of research in majority-if not all courses. Get the response from industry and market regarding the skills and competencies for master graduates obtain conduct exit surveys, and survey students after 2-3 years of their graduate to figure out how helpful the program was.

Inter-disciplinary masters will be helpful; Joint-degrees with best American and Canadian Universities if possible; Streamline the programs and avoid programs for which there are not much demand.
20. Could be completed in less time; will prepare graduates for tomorrow's jobs – even unknown today – by helping graduates to develop judgement, critical thinking and decision making; will allow students to study at times that better suit them; will be a combination of work experience (even short one) with studying.

21. Prepares the student for specific job descriptions, is linked to potential employers, offers internships and is likely to result in employment; such program would appeal to many students and is likely to be self-sustainable. The mechanism to change in response to changing job market should be incorporated in the beginning; such as close monitoring of job trends, employability of former students, the career movement of those former students years after graduation.
22. Supported interdisciplinary research; did not cost the P.I., either through a mechanism self-funding, McGill fellowships or industry; could come into effect within 1 year.
23. That does not graduate students who compete directly with students from BSc/BEng....programs; that offers unique (networking opportunities, training.....i.e. more hands on training in advance technologies; that has the resources needed to (i) assess properly the candidates applying and (ii) be advertised properly at the international level.; that has compulsory sustainability and ethics component.; that provides the resources for research projects in McGill laboratories or collaborator's institution.
24. Had mandatory experiential experience.
25. Is innovative and responsive to the needs of our graduate students, and that avoids falling for the latest fads and buzzwords. I fear that we may be tempted (as an institution) to make ourselves relevant by offering programs that may seem really topical now but that will fade from public view a few years hence. I think we need to reflect in a sober, clear-eyed way on which perceived needs of our graduate students are genuine and which are not. I fear that, without sober reflection, we may squander our opportunity.